SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: Our intention is to maintain Air India as an international airline and not as a sectoral one. And there are many other routes also where we are making profits. It does not mean that where we are making losses, we should increase our fares and choke it up further. This will change the international nature of our airlines. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I am not against the increase of fares.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You put your question quickly.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: My point is, there are complaints of undercutting unofficially by Air India in different foreign countries, particularly western countries. Is it true that they are reducing unofficially prices in some of the western countries to get tourists?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Air India?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Yes, Sir. There is a complaint.

MR. CHAIRMAN: By Indians?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It may be a foreign company and it may be untrue.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let the Minister deny it.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: I have no such information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you give information, he will look into it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: In America, in Great Britain, they are doing it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Improvement in passenger services of airlines

*181. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken/propose to take any steps to improve passenger services of Air India and Indian Airlines both on the ground and in the air; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Government have instructed both Indian Airlines and Air India to review the entire gamut of the relationship with the passengers from the time a passenger proposes to buy an air ticket till he completes his journey in order to remove the difficulties and irritants faced by him. Government have also instructed them to pay foremost attention to customer satisfaction, on-time performance and better utilisation of the fleet. The need for bringing about a major attitudinal change in the employees—that the customer is always right—has also been emphasised.

Subsidence and accidents in Raniganj Coalfields

*185. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing incidents of subsidence and accidents in the coal mines of ECL in Raniganj coalfields;

(b) if so, what is the total number of incidents of subsidence and accidents that occurred during the last three years and the details thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken by ECL and DGMS to prevent reocurrence of such incidents and accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Instances of subsidence have been reported from time to time in Raniganj Coalfield of Eastern Coalfields Limited over the last several years. The subsidence is taking place due to unscientific exploitation of coal during the pre-nationalisation days. Figures of incidence of subsidence as well as that of fatalities due to accidents in mines during the last three years in E.C.L. are given below:—

Year	No. of Subsidence	No. of Fatalities
1988	3	36
1989	12	41
1990	3	32

The details of subsidence during the last three years in Raniganj Coalfields of ECL are indicated in Annexure-I. [*See* Appendix CLX, Annexure No. 341].

(c) With a view to checking the growth of habitation over subsidence prone areas of Raniganj, the Office of Director General of Mines Safety had, in 1950, declared 40 areas unsafe for human habitation. The Government of West Bengal have also passed legislation prohibiting construction of buildings over such unsafe areas. The management of Eastern Coalfields Limited have taken various steps to check the subsidence which include:—

(i) Mining operations being carried out in conformity with the rules and regulations of DGMS;

(ii) Extraction below built-up area is done only in conjunction with showing;

(iii) Restricted working/extraction is carried out in case of working under shallow cover;

(iv) In order to stabilise such unsafe areas in Raniganj Coalfield, ECL has taken up a project based on a new technology of hydropneumatic stoving. Efforts are now in progress to stabilise an area of 8.72 hectares in Raniganj township.

The management of ECL is taking remedial measures in accordance with the norms laid down by DGMS to prevent the occurrence of accidents. All the accidents are inquired into by the Internal Safety Organisation of the company. DGMS also conduct inquiry into the accidents which is a statutory requirement. Appropriate action is being taken on the basis of the findings of the inquiries to check the recurrence of the accidents.

Import of Crude Oil

*186. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of crude oil and petroleum products imported during 1990-91;

(b) the average cost per metric tonne of crude oil imported during 1990-91;

(c) the estimated quantity likely to be imported during 1991-92;

(d) the average estimated cost per tonne thereof; and